

**TOWN OF NEW GLARUS
PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES
THURSDAY JULY 11, 2013 @ 7:00 PM**

ATTENDING: Chris Narveson, Dana Emmerton, Chris Reis, Andy Elkins, Keith Seward
(left at 8:05pm) and Susan McCallum, Deputy Clerk

ABSENT: Pete Raskovic

ALSO ATTENDING: Tammy and David Woerpel, Clark Strok and Tom Mitchell-TPE

CALL TO ORDER: C. Narveson called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

AGENDA:

1. Proof of Posting: Deputy Clerk attested to proper posting.
2. Approve Minutes of June 13, 2013 Parks Minutes: No approval needed as no quorum and no business was conducted. Deputy Clerk asked members present to notify her of any required changes.
3. Public Comments: Tom Mitchell appeared from TPE to follow up with the group as members. S. McCallum said when the group met with Chris Roberts he identified you as the person to talk with regarding a rating system to determine the viability of a parcel identifying a prairie. T. Mitchell said they are primarily concerned with remnant prairies which have never been plowed and may also have seen light grazing. They own 4 parcels mostly between Monticello, Albany and Monroe but they manage other properties. They have formal management agreements with members that have remnant and planted prairies; which are secondary in importance. He said BBRC is a brome grass field, it is an old field not a prairie; it is a long hall to make a planted prairie into a remnant. Typically CRPs are planted prairies. He explained their burning experiences, equipment and priorities; their own properties first, then remnant prairies, next members of TPE and lastly non members. They invite their members to participate in burns and learn the skills necessary to burn their own prairies. There are not many remnant prairies left and they are trying to protect the few parcels remaining such as the nearest one on Postville Rd, Green's Prairie Cemetery an acre in the Town of York, which they burn in the spring. The DNR has reduced budgets and are not able to manage many of their own parks as they no longer have crews. They have just one person for the whole state who primarily writes grants for funding of crews. TPE members are volunteer stewards at the state natural areas, some of these are owned by the state but most are managed by the state. One location is Muralt Bluff Prairie, SNA 65 acres west of Albany. The UW Arboretum owns two parcels in Green County, Abrahams Woods an 80 acres old growth woods and Oliver Prairie, which TPE manages for them. C. Narveson asked if these are open to the public, yes in the Prairie Promoter newsletter there is a list of excursions. He also asked can pastures still be considered remnant prairies. T. Mitchell replied that it depends; at Dower Prairie in Lafayette county 15 years ago, a person hunting noticed during a walk through a pasture, a prairie plant and asked the land owner if he could fence off this small area and the plants came back. This was supported previously with state payments for hunting, which have been withdrawn. C. Narveson said he had been told there are rare

thistles on York Center. T. Mitchell said there are state natural areas such as York Prairies on Hwy 39 and Thompson brothers land on Hay Hollow which has Hills Thistle and the TPE volunteers manage the land. He felt BBRC and windmill ridge may have remaining prairie plants, you will not see these plants along roadsides. Most remaining prairies are hills because they are too steep to plow, so the farmers didn't work the land but were probably grazed. A. Elkins said he has a piece of land in a field up on County Hwy W would he consider taking a look, it was not pastured, but long ago quite a few different crops were planted. They discussed BBRC and controlling the sumac, mowing now and then in August or early September will weaken the plants; this needs to be a repetitive process. Don't do it in spring because it activates reproduction. He recommended that the next burn for BBRC should be the fall of 2014 and spring of 2015. He would come out and take a look at something if the group wanted and Chris Roberts could help with sumac mowing. They are in the process of gaining land trust accreditation for managing easements because people will give them these to prevent development. S. McCallum said the Commission has put a link on their website and Facebook page for TPE so if they have any special event coming send her an email and we can add that to the Facebook page. He spoke about a first annual Prairie Days that the tri-statewide group is hosting and their Chapter's events which are listed in the newsletter.

4. Discuss and consider: BBRC Update with Adam Ingwell, mowing and location of path, boundary marking: A. Ingwell was not present.
5. Review and consider; handouts, program updates form: S. McCallum went through informational and other communication handouts, the program update was not reviewed. She asked whether she could contact the Friends of New Glarus Woods in regards to bird watching stations and invite the president to a future meeting, yes. C. Narveson read a letter from Paul Jennrich thanking the commission for the Arbor Day donation. He has requested the Village to carry over into the 2014 planning for this to be used for park trees at the Valle Telle soccer field, Hoesly Pond, or oak trees for the stream bank restoration by the High School and he would like to discuss these with the Commission. It was decided to invite him to a future meeting to discuss joint projects.
6. Discuss trails and easements review draft letter to property owners: K. Seward asked that this item be moved up on the agenda for discussion tonight, without objection this item was discussed first. S. McCallum distributed and explained maps she produced, including property owners' draft letters regarding the proposed area for a potential trail identified at the last meeting. The documents will need to be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting. C. Strok asked what type of use is planned for these trails and suggested contacting New Glarus Brewery for joint planning/funding of project. C. Narveson said right now they are considering walking trails, A. Elkins said that they would create a circuit and D. Emmerton said they would allow access to trout streams and keep children off private lands. The commission discussed options for working with the brewery. K. Seward challenged the commission look at a broader scope regarding planning for the town and village to develop plans for a trail system. The Commission would need to get approval from the town board for expenditures to fund the planning process and to think of the plan in terms of priorities when asking the Town Board for funding. Maybe there would be a need to incorporate engineering fees in the planning and to work with other entities such as the DNR and the drainage district. He asked that they look into research that had been done by John Wright and whether they

had seen the Village's Back Town plan, C. Narveson stated yes he believes J. Wright had and they have seen the Village's plan. C. Strok suggested inviting the DNR to get their expertise on trails and working with land owners. D. Emmerton suggested inviting all involved parties to a meeting so any issues can be identified. A. Elkins suggested meeting with the DNR first to eliminate restrictions. C. Narveson said maybe a face to face with owners instead of letters. Discussion continued regarding possible land owner issues, surface of the trail, expected use, maintenance and funding. It was decided to contact the DNR for the August or a later meeting and follow-up with John Ott regarding drainage district.

7. Review and discuss impact fees: An updated spreadsheet was distributed, there is new building occurring in the town so this fund is growing.
8. Discuss and consider: Barn Workshop, location possibility: S. McCallum distributed information on the Tell Shooting Barn in the Town on Hwy O, as a possible location for the workshop. All agreed and she will submit the request form, there is a \$150 fee. She also distributed a list of barn restoration businesses, it was decided that C. Narveson will contact Pete Raskovic regarding his contact; a speaker needs to be determined this month. She distributed information regarding Barn Quilts; D. Emmerton will contact this group for participation. It was decided that the workshop will take place Sunday September 15 based on location availability. S. McCallum will let Emmerton know prior to her making contact if the barn is available. Refreshments will include inexpensive treats and apple cider.
Fliers need to go out in August, including information about trees and pre-ordering.
9. Discuss website and Facebook page updates: S. McCallum distributed information on website updates and proposed links and information for Nature Net and Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin. The Commission agreed to these additions.
10. Schedule Next Meeting and Set Agenda: August 8, 7:00 pm. Agenda items to include DNR person and identify possible trails on maps, Barn Workshop, Tree Program discussion- Paul Jennrich
11. Adjourn: A. Elkins motioned to adjourn at 9:27pm, 2nd by D. Emmerton. Motion carried.